

Exhibit Q

Nicolas Sarkozy receives red carpet treatment on business diplomacy mission

Ivorian officials have been treating Nicolas Sarkozy's private trip to Abidjan like a state visit. When he landed in the city on February 20, the former French leader was met by President **Alassane Ouattara**'s chief-of-staff **Patrick Achi** before being whisked away by official escort to the Sofitel Ivoire – a home from home for Sarkozy, who is on the board of the hotel's parent company, **Accor**. He walked past a National Gendarmerie guard of honour before settling into the hotel's Signature Suite. In the evening, after a visit from the French ambassador, **Gilles Huberson**, Sarkozy was transported in an official vehicle again to meet and dine with his old friend, President **Alassane Ouattara**. Earlier today he saw the prime minister and presidential hopeful **Amadou Gon Coulibaly**.

Former national assembly speaker and rival presidential candidate **Guillaume Soro**, who has hired a number of distinctly right-leaning advisers of late ([LC 818](#)), has been trying to get an audience with Sarkozy for weeks ([LC 807](#)). However for the moment, Sarkozy, who informs the Elysee Palace of his movements in Africa, has stayed out of the dispute between Soro and Ouattara.

Sarkozy's trip to Abidjan coincides with that of Israeli mining magnate **Beny Steinmetz**, who is currently in the Ivorian economic capital to meet the prime minister. Last year, Sarkozy helped Steinmetz to patch up his differences with Guinea's President **Alpha Conde** over Simandou ([LC 796](#)). Steinmetz does not have interests in Ivory Coast but in 2016, his former right-hand man, **Marcus Joannes Struick**, took over operation of/acquired the **Compagnie Minière du Bafing** (CMB), which extracts nickel in Founbesso in western Ivory Coast.

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